

Take the Fall by HobbitSpaceCase

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Summary:

He's headed for a cliff and he knows faggots don't get wings, but he'll throw himself right over the edge anyway.

Take the Fall

Author's Note:

Please heed the tags.

Rage bubbles up thick enough to choke him when Harrington lies right to his face at the Byers house.

He can feel his father's hand around his throat, can feel his chest throbbing with the pounding of his heart. Little shit wants to lie to him and pretend this won't end in a fight, like Billy's not already caught in the undertow of emotions he refuses to name, like he's not itching to taste blood on his teeth and feel his knuckles split against that too pretty face.

It feels too fucking easy when Steve goes down in one blow.

Plant your feet.

Billy's feet are fucking planted, growing roots into the ground. He's never gonna get out of here, his dad took him to this dead shithole of a town to bury him, is always gonna have hands around Billy's neck till they choke him into the ground.

You know what happens when I get angry. I break things.

His dad breaks Billy's face, breaks his mirror, sends his favorite earring swirling down the toilet just like Billy's life did when fucking Maxine had to go screaming to mommy about Billy kissing a boy. So Billy breaks the fragile forming bond between them, breaks her fucking skateboard, threatens to break all her new little friends, smash them to pieces on the stupid empty road where Billy can floor it without worrying about crashing into traffic blowing smog into the air two inches in front of his car. She doesn't fucking get it, even after a whole fucking year of living with his dad. Thinks parents are there to put dinner on the table like Billy wasn't the one cooking for his dad most nights in between his mom dying and Susan coming into the picture. Thinks they're there to tuck you in at night, to care about your grades and teach you right from wrong, like Neil ever cared to

teach Billy anything except how many ways there were to get himself hit. Thinks parents are supposed to *love* you no matter what.

She doesn't fucking learn that she can't just run away whenever she wants and everything'll turn out peachy keen, but she does shoot him full of drugs and slam a bat full of nails between his legs, so maybe she learned something after all. The toughest motherfucker in the room makes the rules, and Billy may be tough shit to the preppy morons of Hawkins high, but Max has lived with him long enough to see the weak spots littering his insides.

Billy's building his life here on a foundation of rot, and it's gonna crumble someday soon, come crashing down around and he's not sure he'll survive the ruins. Billy's got fire in him, but he ain't no phoenix rising from his own ashes.

Fighting is the only thing that makes him feel alive these days. Getting his knuckles bruised, feeling the pain he brings on himself for reasons that don't make sense (thanks for the lesson, dad). Picking fights makes him feel like a wildfire, powerful enough to burn everything to the ground, gonna drag as much as he can down with him when he meets his inevitable fall. Tommy has to get punched in the face twice before the dense little fucker stops asking why he and Hargrove came to school with matching bruises on their faces the day after Billy learns having a little sister doesn't mean he's not still the smallest person in his family. Steve tries to ask about the extra bruises too, but he only makes the mistake once.

He's headed for a cliff and he knows faggots don't get wings, but he'll throw himself right over the edge anyway.

It woulda been nice if he could drag Steve down with him into the dark, too, but Steve's off limits for a real beat down just like the rest of Max's friends, and ain't that a fucking joke. King Steve under the protection of Billy's pint-sized step-sister. It's almost as pathetic as Billy's whole entire life. He finally got a taste of Steve's fire and Max had to go ruin things all over again.

He chain-smokes his way through a whole pack of cigarettes before his hands will stop shaking the next time Steve tries to talk to him, and he curls his fists so tight his palms almost bleed and walks away

instead of starting any of the shit he wants to start. When he opens his eyes after his head finally stops spinning and tilts it off the brick wall outside the gym, Steve's not there. Billy's not surprised, even if a part of him wanted Steve to follow.

He thinks, sometimes, when he's flying down dark roads without Max in the passenger seat, alone except for the wind and the road and the purr of the engine shivering up his spine, that he wants Steve to catch him. Thinks it'd be nice to drown in light instead of all the grimy filth filling Billy to the brim. Thinks about how Steve fucking shines, always did from the first moment Billy saw him at that stupid Halloween party and felt something besides alcohol and anger buzzing beneath his skin.

Thoughts like that are usually followed by thoughts of how easy it'd be to slide off the road into one of the stupid Indiana trees, all dead and bleak for winter. Their outsides match his insides, and if he let the wheel twitch just a little bit wrong at the speed he's going he could paint his insides all over the forest.

The quarry can't hold a candle to the ocean Billy might never see again, but it still comforts him with the sound of water lapping gently against the rocks.

It's a patch of inky black and dead quiet in an already dark and quiet wasteland, so Billy can't be blamed for almost missing Steve sitting at the edge. They're both pretty damn lucky the Camaro misses him. He should turn around and leave, but if goes home his dad is in a *breaking things* mood and Billy's getting tired of getting his face broken.

So he puts a smirk on his face and a swagger in his step and climbs out of the car ready to needle Steve till he'd fit right in among the California pines. Right up until Steve looks at him, wide eyes glinting in the Camaro's headlights and Billy goes breathless. Billy sees that look often enough in the mirror, and he knows he doesn't have to drag Steve down. Steve's already falling.

So he recalibrates. "You know if you jump off that ledge, I'm gonna have to jump after you," he says, and rolls his eyes when Steve's face pinches in confusion and little spark of anger. "I'm just saying," he

continues, cupping his hands to light a cigarette and shove it between his lips, "You and me all alone out here in the dark? No way anyone's gonna believe I didn't murder you if you turn up dead."

Steve turns away, staring into the blackness that hides the water far enough away to hurt. "You could just leave," he says, and Billy snorts.

"Thought I told you not to tell me what to do," he says. Steve's shoulders curl in a little more. Billy taps a cigarette against his cheek. "Wanna smoke?" A more honest smile curls up his mouth when Steve takes the fag and lets Billy light it for him.

They let the smoke fill the silence between them for a while, curlign away in wispy feathered clouds. Billy leans his back against the front of the Camaro, tapping restless feet while Steve stays curled up and still, and it almost feels nice.

"Would you push me over the edge if I kissed you?" Steve asks out of nowhere, and Billy stops breathing for the second time that night. Thinks his whole body just stops, suspended in a moment of disbelief in the space between heartbeats.

Steve breaks the tension by kicking a rock into the quarry. It clatters it's way down over the rocks, hits the water with a far off splash, and Billy breathes out a stream of smoke from his lungs. "Depends," Billy says, and takes another drag.

Takes another while the silence stretches thick between them before Steve gets antsy enough to ask, "On what?"

"On whether you meant it, or whether you were just trying to get me to punch you."

Steve turns to him for the first time since he arrived, a frown tugging at his lips and curiosity sparking in his eyes. "You gonna tell me which one'll get which reaction?"

"Nope," Billy says, grinning. The wildfire's back beneath his skin, heart thumping heavy in his chest like he's finally reached that cliff he's been waiting for.

Steve picks himself up, and Billy mirrors him, watches through his

lashes as Steve steps forward and crowds him up against the car. Spreads his legs to let Steve closer, an invitation Steve takes with only a fraction of a second, blink-and-you'd-miss-it hesitation. Billy doesn't blink.

"You finally learn how to plant your feet, Harrington?" Billy breathes into the warm space between them.

"I'm not too good at learning," Steve says back, and Billy can practically taste the words he's so close. "I've been told I'm an idiot."

Billy doesn't get a chance to respond, because Steve is kissing him. It's every bit as good as Billy thought it would be to kiss Steve Harrington. He thought about it a lot, mostly alone in his room with his hand down his pants.

There's fire burning through Billy's rotten veins and a cliff under his feet, and Steve Harrington kissing him like he wants to do nothing else in the world. Billy always knew he was headed for a cliff, and he always knew he didn't deserve wings, but thinks, as his feet uproot themselves, that if anyone *did* deserve wings it'd be Steve Harrington. He doesn't know if Steve's strong enough to hold them both or even wants to try, but that choice is out of his hands. He's already falling when Steve's arms wind around his waist.